

A Safe Baptism.

BY I. D. BOWMAN.

I have been reading carefully all that has been said for and against trine immersion. I am glad that the EVANGELIST gives both sides of the subject. I have seen so much of this erroneous work of publishing one side of a subject, and oftentimes a wrong side and refusing to publish the other that I have been disgusted with it. Publishing both sides of a subject will cause its contributors to be more careful and logical than if but one side was published, thus closing its articles against criticism.

I will now try to give some reasons for believing and practicing trine immersion to the exclusion of all others. My great reason for practicing it is because I *know* it to be a safe mode and I *do not know* of any other that is absolutely and certainly safe. Other modes might do but I do not know them to be safe. Salvation is the greatest thing that could possibly engage our minds, and for this reason I am not willing to accept anything that I do not know to be safe, and there is nothing plainer taught in the Bible than that baptism is necessary for salvation. For this reason I want to be especially careful in selecting a mode that is absolutely safe. Doubtless, some of you will say, an assertion is worth nothing without proof. I am glad to believe that some will be so thoughtful. My creed, the Bible, teaches me to "prove all things and hold fast to that which is good." Hence I am going to prove my assertion.

Remember my assertion. It don't say that everybody will go to hell that is not baptized by trine immersion, neither does it say that any other mode will or will not do. The assertion is simply this. I know trine immersion to be a safe baptism and I do not know of any other mode that is absolutely and certainly safe. We have an apostolic example of baptism in the eighth chapter of Acts. We read that Philip and the eunuch came "unto a certain water." Unto means close by, at or to the water. Then they went further than to the water, they went down *into* it, and he, Philip, baptized him, the eunuch. Here we can forever settle one point. That it is safe to go into the water to be baptized. We can clearly prove that many were baptized in the water because the Bible clearly says so, but no man can prove that even one was baptized by water baptism without going into the water. The New Testament does not give a single case. You may possibly draw a few inferences or false deductions but no positive proof. Hence it is safe to go into the water to be baptized and not safe to try to be baptized without going into the water. Some may say that the baptism of the eunuch does not even prove immersion much less trine immersion. True, it does not, as translated by King James, but it is one of the strongest inferences imaginable in favor of immersion. It is not reasonable to suppose that both would have gone down into the water to put a few drops on the eunuch's head, that would have looked like wading into a stream of water with a cup in hand to get a drink when you could more easily have dipped it up, and saved getting your feet wet. Paul says, Rom. 6: 5, "We Christians are buried in baptism unto death," and as "we are all one in Christ Jesus." These words are just as applicable to us as they were to them. Therefore, we all of Christ's followers should be buried in baptism. To bury anything it must be entirely covered, otherwise, it would only be partially buried, hence, we are to be baptized by being buried in the water then arise out of the water to walk in newness of life. In John 3: 5 we read "except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," for a child to be born physically it must come forth from its mother's womb. To be born of water the applicant must be covered with water before he can come forth in the sense of a birth. We also read in Heb. 10: 22 that "our bodies" should be "washed with pure water." It is surely safe to "be buried in baptism" and as "we are all one in Christ" it is safe for all of us to "be buried in baptism," and it is not safe for us to try to be baptized without being "buried in baptism"; hence immersion is safe, an important question may be asked, how to be immersed, forward

or backward? It is not absolutely necessary to prove forward action in order to prove trine immersion. It may be performed backward or forward and has been performed both ways, but as the Bible teaches forward action. I will produce some proof. Rom. 6: 5, "for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be, (yet future), in the likeness of his resurrection." We must be buried or planted in the likeness of his death, or like he died. He "bowed his head and died." He did not bow his head backward, he could not for the cross would have been in the way. It would have been a very unnatural way of bowing. We should bow our heads in the water when we are baptized, like Christ bowed his head when he died, which was forward not backward.

How clear Paul's language, "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death." "Have been" (sometime in the past), that is when we were baptized, then we were "planted in the likeness of his death." All in the past. The rest of the sentence is future, we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection," when he comes again and resurrects us at the last day, then, "we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection," when this mortal puts on immortality and we shall ever be with the Lord, hence, "shall be in the likeness of his resurrection," has no reference to baptism, but to the resurrection at the last day. I could give ten or perhaps fifteen more reasons in favor of forward action, and if necessary, can give them in the future. Now all nations are commanded to be baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." If (as the apostle says,) we should be "buried in baptism," and if "we are all one in Christ Jesus," then all Christians should be "buried in baptism," and if all nations should be buried "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," then it is inevitable to the candid investigator, that all that accept Christ must be buried "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Now to be buried "into the name of the Father" is one burial, and of the Son is two burials, and the Holy Ghost is three burials. The common sense view of the commission teaches us three actions, the most critical analysis, based upon the best rules of the English language, proves three actions. But says the single immersionist, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one. True, so are man and wife one, and they are two just as much as they are one. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one in one sense, and in another they are three. We have an abundance of evidence to prove that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three distinct personalities. Jesus says in John 17: 11, "Holy Father, keep those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are." Here Christ says plainly that he and the Father are one as we Christians are one. If all Christians are one personality, then the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one personality. If we Christians are all distinct personalities, but one, in the advance of the cause of God, then the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are separate and distinct personalities, but one, in the advance of their cause. When Stephen was stoned to death, he saw Christ standing by God's side, and when Christ was baptized, the Holy Ghost was seen descending from God. Hence, God was in heaven, he sent the Holy Ghost, and Christ was on earth. These proofs ought to forever settle the question that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct personalities.

Now to forever settle the question, whether single or trine immersion is right, is to find out if the commission is given in the sense in which they are three or in the sense in which they are one. The commission as given in Matt. 28: 19, is the place to go to forever settle the number of actions, because all nations are commanded to be baptized according to this formula. Just give the commission to any intelligent, unprejudiced schoolboy and tell him to analyze or parse it. He will soon tell you it teaches three actions. Baptizing them into the name of the Father one, and of the Son two, and of the Holy Ghost three. We find also by consulting our Greek grammars, that as the commission stands in the original Greek, it proves

beyond a reasonable doubt that three actions or trine immersion is required. I will give a rule from one of our standard Greek grammars: "when several substantives are connected by 'and' or 'and of' (*kai*) the Greek word and of and the article is repeated with each, then separate ideas are considered independent of each other, but when the article is not repeated then the separate ideas are considered as forming one single conception. Kuhner's Greek grammar, p. 318. We find in the commission the article "the" is before each noun hence, we are baptized in each name separate and distinct from each other. Hence we find according to the English and the Greek, trine immersion is required. The Greek church has always understood the commission to teach trine immersion and they surely ought to understand their own language, and over 80,000,000 living Greeks have been baptized by trine immersion.

Trine immersion is the oldest mode of baptism according to history. I don't believe any honest, intelligent historian will deny this fact. Trine immersion was the prevailing mode of all churches of any note for the first 1300 years after Christ. Trine immersion is the baptism by which over 50,000,000 saints that suffered martyrdom were baptized. Both Daniel and Revelation call them saints. This is a strong argument to prove that trine immersion is safe. Trine immersion is the baptism that the Catholic church practiced from the time of the apostles until the fifteenth century. Their historians admit this, but they claim the Pope had the power to change it. Some of them laugh at us changing with them when we do not claim this authority. But this authority Paul would not give an angel from heaven. Hence they nor we had any right to change the mode of baptism. Trine immersion is the only baptism that all Pede-Baptist churches of any note admit the validity of.

About all Pede-Baptist churches that I know of would accept me into their church without re-baptism. They admit it will do. They admit it to be safe. I could unite with any church I know of without being re-baptized except the German Baptists and they baptize like we do. Now the reason I know trine immersion is safe and I do not know of any other mode to be safe is because no other mode has half the points in its favor that trine immersion has.

If these reasons that I have given are not sufficient to prove trine immersion to your minds I have yet other good reasons I can produce in the future and will do it with pleasure.

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Character is Capital.

The man who is known to be honest, and of sound judgment, commands the confidence and the resources of others. While men will not trust a rogue out of their sight, they confide in the integrity of an honest upright man. He may be in debt; he may have need to borrow; he may be dependent on the help and good will of others; but so long as he will tell the truth, and honestly try to fulfill his engagements, his character counts for thousands, and is worth to him more than silver or gold.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches; and a man who does business year after year prudently, honestly, and uprightly, will not often lack for friends and helpers in time of need or straits. But the man who, for some present advantage, condescends to cheating, falsehood, and rascality, will soon find that for a temporary gain he has suffered an irreparable loss. His character gone, society watches him as it does a thief, and long years may elapse before he can recover from the effects of his own suicidal act.

Young man! Old man! Be honest, faithful, and true, and if you have no other wealth let your character be your capital.—SEL.

'Tis the mind that makes the body rich.—Shakespeare.

The longer I live the more I am assured that the business of life is to understand the Lord Christ. Nothing else is to be called the business of life at all. I am extreme, you may think; but this is liberty and life to me—to know Christ.—G. McDonald.